<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 28, 2009. Claims 34, 37, 40, 43 and 44 are pending in the application, with Claims 43 and 44 having been newly added. Claims 34, 37 and 40 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 34, 37 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,426,801 (Reed). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 34, 37 and 40 generally concern an image processing apparatus including plural card slots in which plural kinds of detachable cards are respectively inserted. Data is read out from memory cards inserted in the card slots. An accessible card slot is set as a slot which can be accessed to read data, while a card slot other than the accessible card slot is set as inaccessible. It is checked whether a memory card is inserted in each of the plural card slots, in order.

According to aspects of Claims 34, 37 and 40, it is determined which card slot is set to have a priority relative to others of the plural card slots. If a first memory card is inserted in a first checked card slot and the first checked card slot has been determined to have the priority, the first checked card slot as the accessible card slot. On the other hand, if the first checked card slot has not been set to have the priority and a second memory card is inserted in a second card slot, the second card slot is set as the accessible card slot.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to read out data from a suitable card slot, without requiring a user to perform complicated operations to examine and switch between the plural card slots. For example, a user may wish to read out data

from a memory card inserted in a card slot other than the first checked card slot. According to Claims 34, 37 and 40, it is ordinarily possible for the user to read data from a second memory card in a second card slot without an operation to select the second card slot, as long as priority is not set to the first card slot.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 34 is directed to an image processing apparatus which includes plural card slots in which plural kinds of detachable memory cards are respectively inserted. The apparatus includes a reading unit configured to read out data from memory cards inserted in the card slots. The apparatus also includes an access control unit configured to set a card slot as an accessible card slot which the reading unit can access and to set a card slot other than the accessible card slot as inaccessible. The apparatus further includes a checking unit configured to check whether a memory card is inserted in each of the plural card slots, in order. In addition, the apparatus includes a determining unit configured to determine which card slot has been set to have a priority relative to others of the plural card slots. In a case where a first memory card is inserted in a first checked card slot which is first checked by the checking unit, the access control unit sets the first checked card slot in which the first memory card is inserted as the accessible card slot if the determining unit determines that the first checked card slot has been set to have the priority, and sets a second card slot in which a second memory card is inserted as the accessible card slot if the determining unit determines that the first checked card slot has not been set to have the priority and the checking unit finds that the second memory card is inserted in the second card slot. The second card slot is a card slot other than the first checked card slot in which the first memory card is inserted.

Independent Claims 37 and 40 are directed to a method and a computer-readable storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 34.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 34, 37 and 40, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of (i) determining which card slot has been set to have a priority, (ii) setting a first checked card slot in which a first memory card is inserted as an accessible card slot if the first checked card slot has been set to have the priority, and (iii) setting a second card slot as the accessible card slot if the first checked card slot has not been set to have the priority and a second memory card is inserted in the second card slot.

As understood by Applicants, Reed is directed to a printer having a first drive and a port for interfacing with a second drive. The printer determines whether the computer-readable medium is in a first drive, a second drive, or a third drive. See Reed, Abstract and Figure 8.

However, Reed is not seen to disclose or suggest setting priority to card slots at all, much less (i) determining which card slot has been set to have a priority, (ii) setting a first checked card slot in which a first memory card is inserted as an accessible card slot if the first checked card slot has been set to have the priority, and (iii) setting a second card slot as the accessible card slot if the first checked card slot has not been set to have the priority and a second memory card is inserted in the second card slot.

Since Reed does not disclose the above-noted features, it logically follows that Reed does not disclose the attendant benefits of such an arrangement. For example, as

seen by Applicants, if a user wishes to read out data from a card inserted in Reed's second drive, the user has to remove a card from the first drive.

In view of the above, independent Claims 34, 37 and 40 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the claims, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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